THE GRAVE

PUNISHMENT AND BLESSINGS

By

Husayn al-Awayishah

Translated By

Huda Khattab

International Islamic Publishing House

IIPH

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عذابه ونعيمه

حسين العوايشة

0218002002

القبر

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حسين العوايشة



دار ابن حزم

الدار العالمية للكتاب الإسلامي

95

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH
THE MERCIFUL THE COMPASSIONATE

Published by:

* **International Islamic Publishing House**
IIPH
P.O. Box 55195
Riyadh 11534
Saudi Arabia
Tel: (966-1) 4650818-4647213
Fax: (966-1) 4633489
E-Mail: **iiph1@hotmail.com**
* **DAR IBN HAZM**
P.O. BOX: 14-6366
Beirut - Lebanon
Tel - Fax: (9611) 701974

ISBN 9960-672-80-8

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TRANSLATOR'S FOREWORD:

Questions abound about what happens after death. In Western societies, in particular, there is a great deal of speculation on these matters. Muslims, however, have answers to these questions. Islam tells us what we can expect when we have finally made our exit from this world; we are also given ample guidance as to how we may best prepare ourselves and earn the rewards of Paradise in the Hereafter. In this book, Husayn al-'Awayishah outlines the Islamic teaching on death and the grave. It is an essential reading for any Muslim who wants to know more about this topic from the authentic sources of Islam.

Huda Khattab

NOTE ON ABBREVIATIONS:

The following abbreviations are used in this book:

SWT- Subhanahu wa Ta'ala (May He be glorified and exalted).

SAAS-Sall-Allahu 'Alayhi wa Sallam (May Allah bless him and grant him peace).

RA-Radi Allahu 'Anhu (May Allah be pleased with him)\ Radi Allahu 'Anha (May Allah be pleased with her)\ Radi Allahu 'Anhum (May Allah be pleased with them).

AS-'Alayhis-Salam (Peace be upon him)\ 'Alayhim al-Salam (Peace be upon them).

NOTE ON TRANSLATION OF QUR'ANIC QUOTATIONS:

The translations of quotations from the Holy Qur'an are adapted from the Translation and Commentary by A. Yusuf Ali (1983 edition, published by Amana Corp, U.S.A.). The adaptations are:

1- The archaic style of English used by Yusuf Ali has been updated, i.e. the the pronouns such as «thou», «ye», have been amended to «you». Verbs have been amended accordingly, so that «goeth» becomes «goes». etc.

2- The word «God» has been replaced with the word «Allah».

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

Praise be to Allah: we praise Him and seek His help and forgiveness. We seek refuge with Him from the evils of our own souls and deeds. Whomever Allah (SWT) guides, no-one can lead astray, and whomever He leaves astray, no-one can guide. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah (SWT) Alone Who has no partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His Slave and Messenger.

As a continuation of the *Bidayat al-Salikin series*, Allah (SWT) has enabled me to produce this book, *The Grave-Punishment and Blessings*. I believe that it was necessary to present this information to my Muslim brothers, because the punishments and blessings of the grave are topics which have to do with 'Aqidah, topics which we must know about. The pillars of Iman, the punishments and blessings of the grave, the punishments of Hell and the blessings of Paradise... knowing and believing in all these lead to the reform of the heart, which in turn will lead to the re-

form of the external aspects of life, including the correction of morals on which a safe and secure life for society as a whole, and indeed the entire Ummah, may be built.

For we know that the cause of corruption, whether on an individual or group basis, is the lack of a deterrent. The greatest deterrent is belief in Allah (SWT) and in the knowledge that He sees all that we do, in private or in public, in secret or in the open; and belief in the angels, and in the blessings and punishment of the grave; and belief in Paradise and Hell... and in all the other things which must be believed in.

Before the believer says or does anything, he must weigh it up, bearing in mind his consciousness of Allah (SWT), Hell and Paradise, and the blessings and punishment of the grave. Thus the believer should do nothing but good; but if he does or says something that does not befit him, then he will feel as if the punishment of the grave and Hell is closer to him than the soles of his own feet, and he will not feel at peace

until he has asked Allah (SWT) for forgiveness for his sins, repented to Him and returned to Him, weeping, with humility and regret.

Filled with these good beliefs, the early Muslims conquered the world. But because of our ignorance of these same momentous beliefs, our Ummah has lost its highest morals and ethics; we have lost our happiness, stability and security; we have lost the brotherly love between one another, and we have forgotten about Jihad and making sacrifices for the sake of Allah (SWT). This has encouraged our enemies, who call one another to attack us like people calling one another to eat from a communal pot. We have lost so much in this world, yet losing out in the Hereafter will be even worse. But this Din of ours is the torch of guidance which lights the way for the Ummah and for those seeking the way to Allah (SWT). It revives hearts and joins them together, and banishes hatred and enmity. It restores honour and happiness-but only if we adhere to it properly. «... Is there any that will receive admonition?» [al-Qamar 54:15].

I cannot thank enough all those who offered help and assistance in the preparation of this book, especially my shaykh, Muhammad Nasir al-Din al-Albani, who let me consult his not-yet-published book, *Sahih al-Targhib wa'l-Tarhib*, to use for my research. May Allah (SWT) reward him with good.

We ask Allah (SWT) to make this book purely for His sake. May He accept it from me, and may He protect me and my brothers in Islam from the punishments of the grave and Hell-fire, and bestow upon us the blessings of the grave and Paradise. We ask Him for the good things in this world and the next. Verily He is able to do all things.

PART ONE

WHAT HAPPENS JUST BEFORE THE SOUL IS TAKEN?

1- Allah's hesitation to take the soul of a Believer.

From Abu Hurayrah (RA) who said: The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said: [«Allah, may He be exalted, said: 'Whoever shows enmity to some one devoted to Me, I shall be at war with him. My servant draws not near to Me with anything more loved by Me than the religious duties I have enjoined upon him, and My servant continues to draw near to Me with supererogatory works so that I shall love him. When I love him, I am his hearing with which he hears, his seeing with which he sees, his hand with which he strikes and his foot with which he walks. Were he to ask [something] of Me, I would surely give it to him, and were he to ask Me for refuge, I would surely grant him it. I do not hesitate about anything as much as I hesitate about [seizing] the soul of My faithful servant: he hates

death and I hate hurting him».

[al-Bukhari].

2- The presence of Shaytan at the deathbed.

The Shaytan is most eager to be present at a person's deathbed, so that the end of a person's life may be accompanied by sin and rebellion [i.e. towards Allah (SWT), just as he is ever-eager to be present in all of a person's deeds. This is indicated in the Hadith narrated by Jabir (RA), that the Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said: «The Shaytan is present with any one of you in everything he does; he is present even when he eats food. So if any one of you drops a mouthful of food, he should remove anything dirty on it and eat it, and not leave it for the Shaytan. When he finishes (food) he should lick his fingers, for he does not know in which portion of his food the blessing lies».

[Muslim].

PART TWO

WHEN DEATH COMES

1- The Kafir seeks to return to the world when death comes.

Allah, may He be exalted, says:

«(In Falsehood will they be) until, when death comes to one of them, he says: 'O my Lord! send me back (to life),- in order that I may work righteousness in the things I neglected!'- 'By no means! It is but a word he says. '- Before them is a partition till the Day they are raised up». [al-Mu'muinun 23:99-100].

2- The agonies of death.

Al-Bukhari narrated from 'A'ishah (RA) who said: The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said: «There is no god but Allah. Truly there is agony in death»[1].

3- A Kafir's belief at the point of death is not acceptable.

From Ibn'Abbas (RA) who said: The Messenger of

Allah (SAAS) said: «When Pharaoh was drowning, he said: 'I believe that there is no god but He in Whom the Children of Israel believe.' Jibril told me: 'O Muhammad, if only you could have seen how I took the black mud of the sea and shoved it in his mouth for fear that the mercy of Allah would reach him'»[2].

4- The Angel of Death sits at the head of the dying person*.

5- The Angel of Death informs the believer of Allah's forgiveness and pleasure, and informs the Kafir of Allah's wrath and anger*.

Footnotes:

1. Also narrated by Ahmad in *al-Musnad.*
2. Ahmad, *al-Musnad*; al-Tirmidhi, *Sahih al-Jami*; No. 5082.

* The events marked with an asterisk in Parts Two and Three are derived from one source, namely the lengthy Hadith of al-Bara' Ibn 'Azib, which includes many other events. I thought it best to present them in the order in which they appear in the Hadith.

PART THREE

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE SOUL IS TAKEN?

1- The soul of the believer comes out easily; the Kafir is punished with the difficulty with which his soul comes out*.

2- The soul of the believer comes out with a scent like the finest musk, and the soul of the Kafir comes out with a stench like the foulest rotting meat*.

3- The believer's soul comes out whilst he is praising Allah (SWT).

   The Prophet (SAAS) said: «The believer's soul comes out from inside him, whilst he is praising Allah».

4- When the soul is taken, the eyes follow it- because the Prophet (SAAS) said: «When the soul is taken, the eyes follow it».

   [Muslim et al].

5- The angels open all of the heavens, one after the other, for the soul of the believer, all of it is opened for him*.

6- The gates of heaven are not opened for the Kafir*.

7- Allah, may He be exalted, orders that the soul of the Believer should be returned to earth after his book has been registered in *al-'Illiyun* [lit. «The High Places»- see al-Mutaffifin 83:18-20].

8- The soul of the Kafir is thrown down from the heaven back into his body, after his book has been registered in *Sijjin* [see al-Mutaffifin 83:7-9][1].

9- The dead person is aware of the comforting presence of the righteous people around his grave at the burial, for a period of time equal to the time taken to sacrifice a camel and distribute its meat, as it was reported that 'Amr Ibn al-'As (RA) said: «When you bury me, stay around my grave for the time it would take to sacrifice a camel

and distribute its meat, so that I may be comforted by your presence, until I see how I will answer the messenger of my Lord».

[Muslim].

10- The pressing-in of the grave, which no-one will escape. From Ibn 'Abbas (RA), who said: The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said: «If anyone could escape from the pressing-in of the grave, it would be sa'd Ibn Mu'adh, but even he was pressed by his grave before he was released»[2].

11- Mental faculties will be restored to the dead in the grave.

From 'Abdullah Ibn 'Umar (RA): The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) mentioned the tormentor of the grave, and 'Umar asked: «Will our mental faculties be restored to us, O Messenger of Allah?» The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said: «Yes, just as they are now». 'Umar said: «I will put a stone in his mouth!»[3].

12- The deceased person hears the footsteps of his companions when they leave him*.

13- When is the deceased questioned?

The questioning begins immediately after the burial, because whenever he buried someone, the Prophet (SAAS) would stand at the graveside and tell the people: «Ask Allah to forgive your brother and give him strength, for he is being questioned right now»[4].

14- Two angels come to question (the deceased).

15- The names and description of the two angels who come to question (the deceased).

From Abu Hurayrah (RA) who said: The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said: «When the deceased is buried, two black-and-blue coloured angels will come to him. One is called Munkar and the other is called Nakir. They will ask: «What did you use to say about this man?» He will say what he used to say: «He is the slave and

messenger of Allah. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His Slave and Messenger». They will say: «We knew that you would say this..»[5].

16- Allah will help and strenghten the Believers in the grave.

The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said: «When the Believer is sat up in his grave, he will bear witness that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, and that is the meaning of the Ayah: «Allah will establish in strength those who believe, with the word that stands firm..» [Ibrahim 14:27].

[al-Bukhari].

17- The reply of the believer and the confusion of the Kafir.

18- The righteous man will sit in his grave unafraid before the questioning, whilst the evil man will sit in his grave utterly terrified.

From 'A'ishah (RA) who said: «A Jewish woman came and asked for food at my doorstep, saying: «Feed me. may Allah protect you from the Fitnah of the Dajjal and the Fitnah of the punishment of the grave» ['A'ishah] said: I kept her talking until the Messenger of Allah came, then I asked him: «O Messenger of Allah, what is this Jewish woman saying?» I said: «She says: May Allah protect you from the Fitnah of the Dajjal and the Fitnah of the punishment of the grave. 'A'ishah said: Then the Messenger of Allah (SAAS) stood up and raised his hands [in supplication], seeking refuge with Allah from the Fitnah of the Dajjal and the Fitnah of the punishment of the grave. Then he said: «As for the Fitnah of the Dajjal, there has never been a Prophet who did not warn his people against him, but I will tell you something which no Prophet has warned his people about before: he (the Dajjal) is one-eyed, and Allah is not one-eyed: written between his eyes is [the word] *Kafir*, which every believer will read. As for the Fitnah of the grave, [the deceased] will be tested concerning me and asked about me. If he was a righteous man, he will be sat up in his grave, without fear or terror,

then he will be asked: «What did you used to say about Islam? Who was this man who was among you?» He will say: «Muhammad the Messenger of Allah, who brought the clear signs from Allah, so we believed him».

«A hole will be opened for him, through which he will see the Hell-fire, parts of it consuming others. He will be told: 'Look at that which Allah has saved you from'. Then a hole will be opened through which he will see Paradise, with all its luxuries. He will be told: This is your place in it'. He will be told: 'You had strong faith, you died with strong faith, and you will be resurrected with strong faith, in sha' Allah'».

«If he was a bad man, he will be sat up in his grave, full of fear and terror, and he will be asked: «What did you use to say?» He will say: «I heard the people saying such-and-such, so I said likewise'. A hole will be opened for him, through which he will see Paradise with all its luxuries, and he will be told: 'Look at that which Allah has taken away from you'. Then a hole will be opened for him, through which he will

see Hell-fire, parts of it consuming others. He will be told: «This is your place in it. You used to doubt, you died doubting and you will be resurrected doubting, in sha' Allah'. Then he will be punished»[6].

19- For the Believer, a door will be opened from his grave onto Paradise*.

20- For the Kafir, a door will be opened from his grave onto Hell-fire*.

21- The Believer will see his place in Paradise, and the Kafir will see his place in Hell-fire*.

22- The grave of the Believer will be widened as far as the eye can see, and the grave of the Kafir will be constricted*.

23- The good deeds will come in the form of a handsome, well-dressed, finely-perfumed man, who will bring glad tidings. The bad deeds will come in the form of a scruffily-dressed, stinking man who will bring disturbing news*.

24- The Kaffir will be struck with an iron chain until he is turned to dust*.

This is indicated by the Hadith of al-Bara' Ibn 'Azib (RA) who said: «We went out with the Prophet (SAAS) to attend the funeral of one of the Ansari men. When we reached the grave, and before the man was buried, the Messenger of Allah (SAAS) sat down [facing the Qiblah] and we sat down around him. We were as silent and still as if there were birds on our heads, and he had in his hand a stick with which he scratched up the earth. [He began to look up to the sky and down at the ground, and he raised and lowered his gaze three times]. He said: 'Seek refuge with Allah from the punishment of the grave.'- two or three times. Then he said: 'When the believing slave is reaching the end of his time in this world, and starting out in the Hereafter, angels with white faces which look like the sun come down to him from Heaven, bringing one of the shrouds of Paradise and some of its *Hunut*[7]. They sit down around him, as far as the eye can see. Then the Angel of Death comes and sits by his head, and says: «O good

[or secure] soul, come out to the forgiveness and pleasure of Allah».- The narrator said: So it will come out like a drop of water coming out of the mouth of a waterskin, and he [the Angel of Death] will take it. [In another report, he said: «Until when his soul comes out, every angel who is between the heaven and the earth will pray for him, as will every angel in heaven. The gates of heaven will be opened for him, and the people in every level of heaven will pray to Allah to permit his soul to ascend through their domain».

«When (the Angel of Death) has taken the soul, the (other angels) don't leave it in his hand for a moment; they take it straightaway, wrap it in the shroud and scent it with the Hunut. This is what Allah says: «... '*When death approaches any of you, Our angels take his soul, and they never fail in their duty'». [al-An'am 6:61].*

«And there emerges from the soul a scent like the finest musk to be found on the face of the earth. He said: They take the soul up, and whenever they take

it past a group of angels, they say who is this good soul?, and they reply' It is so-and-so, the son of so-and-so' using the best names with which he was addressed in this world. (They go on) until they reach the first heaven; they ask for it to be opened, and it is opened for them. In each heaven, those who are closest to Allah will accompany him to the next heaven, until they reach the seventh heaven, where Allah, may He be exalted and glorified, will say: Register the book of My slave in 'Illiyun 'And what will explain to you what 'Illiyun is? (There is) a Register (fully) inscribed, to which bear witness those nearest (to Allah). '[al-Mutaffifin 83:19-21]. So his book will be registered in 'Illiyun. Then Allah (SWT) will say: Take him back to the earth, for «This was my promise»: I created them from it, I will return them to it, and I will resurrect them from it again.' He said: He will be taken back to the earth, and his soul will be returned to his body. [He said: And he will hear the footsteps of his companions as they leave him]. Two stern angels will come to him, [rebuke him] and sit him up. They will ask him, 'Who is your Lord?' He will answer: 'My Lord is Allah'. They will ask him:

'What is your religion?' He will say: 'My religion is Islam'. They will ask: Who is this man who was sent among you? He will say: 'He is the Messenger of Allah (SAAS)'. 'They will ask him: What did you do? He will say: I read (or recited) the Book of Allah, and I believed in it. He will rebuke him and ask: Who is your Lord? What is your religion? Who is your Prophet?- This is the last of the trials to face the Believers, as Allah, may He be glorified says: 'Allah will establish in strength those who believe, with the word that stands firm in this world and in the Hereafter...» [Ibrahim 14:27]. He will say: 'My Lord is Allah, my religion is Islam and my Prophet is Muhammad (SAAS)'.

«A voice will call from Heaven: 'My slave has spoken the Truth, so furnish his grave from Paradise and clothe him from Paradise, and open for him a gate to Paradise'. He said: Some of its breeze and scent will reach him, and his grave will be widened for him as far as the eye can see. He said: There will come to him (or there will appear before him) a handsome, well-dressed and finely-scented man, who

will say: 'I bring good news which will make you glad. I bring good news of the good pleasure of Allah, and Gardens wherein is eternal blessing. This is the day which you were promised.' He will say: 'And you, may Allah give you better news. Who are you?' He will say: 'I am your good deeds, and by Allah I only ever saw you hastening to obey Allah, and ever-reluctant to disobey Him, so may Allah reward you with good'. Then a gate of Paradise and a gate of Hell will be opened for him, and it will be said to him: 'This is your place (Manzil) if you had disobeyed Allah, but Allah has given you this instead of that'. When he sees what is in Paradise he will say: 'My Lord! Hasten the coming of the Hour, so that I may return to my family and my wealth'. It will be said to him: 'Be patient' (Literally, 'Dwell here').

«He said: as for the disbelieving (lit. corrupt) man, when he leaves this world and enters the Hereafter, stern and harsh angels come down to him from heaven; their faces are black and they bring with them sack-cloth from Hell. They sit around him, as far as the eye can see. The Angel of Death comes and sits at

his head, and says: 'O evil soul, come out to the anger and wrath of Allah!' He said: The soul will be dragged out of his body with as much difficulty as a many-pronged skewer being dragged through wet wool (the veins and nerves will be destroyed by it). He will be cursed by every angel between heaven and earth, and by every angel in heaven. The gates of heaven will be locked and the people of every heaven will pray to Allah not to allow his soul to asend through their domain. He will take it, and immediately put it into the sack-cloth; it will stink like the foulest stench of dead flesh ever witnessed on earth. They will take the soul up, and whenever they take it past a group of angels, they will say: 'Who is this evil soul?' They say: 'It is so-and-so the son of so-and-so', using the worst names with which he was addressed in the world. (They will go on) until they reach the first heaven; they will ask for it to be opened to them, and it will not be opened. Then the Messenger of Allah (SAAS) recited: '.. No opening will there be of the gates of heaven, nor will they enter the Garden, until the camel can pass through the eye of the needle...' [al-A'raf 7:40]. Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, will say:

'Register his book in Sijjin, in the lowest earth'.

Then Allah will say: 'Take him back to the earth, for «this was my promise»: I created them from it, I will return them to it, and I will resurrect them from it again'. So his soul will be thrown down from heaven until it reaches his body. Then he recited: '.. If anyone assigns partners to Allah, he is as if he had fallen from heaven and been snatched up by birds, or the wind had swopped (like a bird on its prey) and thrown him into a far-distant place'. [al-Hajj 22:31].

So his soul will be returned to his body (he said: he will hear the footsteps of his companions when they leave him). Two stern angels will come to him, rebuke him and sit him up. They will ask him: 'Who is your Lord?' He will say: '*Hah-hah* [indicative of pain or laughter], I do not know!' They will ask him: 'What is your religion?' He will say: '*Hah - Hah*, I do not know' They will ask: 'What do you say about this man who was sent among you?' He will not even know his name, but he will be told- 'Muhammad'- and he will say: 'Hah-Hah, I do not know! I heard

the people saying such-and-such'. He will be told: 'May you never know!'.

Then a voice will call from heaven, saying: 'He has lied, so furnish his grave from Hell, and open for him a gate to Hell'- so some of its heat and venom will reach him, and his grave will be constricted until his ribs are crushed togther. There will come to him (or there will appear before him) a man with an ugly face, badly-dressed, and foul-smelling. He will say: 'I bring you bad news: this is the day which you were promised'. He will say: 'And you, may Allah give you even worse news! Who are you? Your face brings bad news!' He will say: 'I am your evil deeds. By Allah, I only ever saw you reluctant to obey Allah, and ever-eager to disobey Him. May Allah repay you with evil!' Then there will be sent to him one who is blind, deaf and dumb, who will carry in his hand an iron rod which, if he were to beat a camel with it, would turn it to dust. He will beat him with it until he turns to dust, then Allah will restore him, then he will be beaten again. He will emit a scream which the whole of creation will hear, except for men

and Jinn. Then a gate will be opened for him to Hell, and his grave will be furnished from Hell. 'He will say: My Lord, may the Hour never come!'*.

25- The people of heaven will welcome the good soul, and there will be glad tidings for it.

26- There will be no welcome for the evil soul, and only bad tidings for it.

27- The Believer will see the Fire from which Allah has saved him.

28- There will be a little gap through which the evil man will glimpse the Paradise which Allah has denied him.

The Prophet (SAAS) said: 'The dead person is attended by angels. If he was a righteous man they say: 'Come out, O good soul who was in a good body! Come out praiseworthy, and receive the glad tidings of comfort and sweet scent, and a Lord Who is not angry'. They keep on saying this unitl (the soul) comes out, then they take it up to the heaven, and ask

for it to be opened for him. It is asked, 'Who is this?' and they say 'So-and-so,' so (the inhabitants of heaven) say: Welcome to the good soul, who was in a good body; enter praiseworthy and receive the good tidings of comfort and sweet scents, and a Lord who is not angry. 'And they carry on saying this until they reach the (highest) heaven where Allah, may He be blessed and exalted, is. And if he was a bad man, they say: 'Come out, O evil soul! Come out blameworthy, and receive the tidings of a boiling fluid, and a fluid dark, murky, intensely cold!- and other penalties of a similar kind, to match them! [cf. Sad 38:57-58]. They keep on saying this until (the soul) comes out, then they take it up to the heaven and ask for it to be opened for it. It is asked, 'Who is this?' They say, 'It is so-and-so'. They say: 'There is no welcome for the evil soul who was in an evil body. Go back blameworthy. The gates of heaven are not opened for you. So (the soul) is sent back from the heaven, and returns to the grave.

The righteous man is sat up in his grave, not scared or terrified. He is asked: 'In what [religion] were

you?' He says: 'I was in Islam'. He is asked: 'Who is this man?' He says: 'Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah (SAAS). He brought us clear signs from Allah and we believed him'. He is asked: 'Have you seen Allah?' He says: 'No-one may see Allah'. Then he is shown Hell-fire, parts of it consuming others, and he is told: 'Look at that which Allah, may He be exalted, has saved you from'. Then he is shown Paradise, and he looks at its beauty and everything in it. He is told: 'This is your place'. And he is told: 'You were certain (*'ala'l-Yaqin*), you died certain, and you will be raised certain, in sha 'Allah.

The bad man is sat up in his grave, scared and terrified. He is asked: in what [religion] were you? He says: I don't know. He is asked: Who is this man? He says: I heard the people saying such-and-such, and I said likewise. Then he is shown Paradise, and looks at its beauty and everything in it. He is told, Look at that which Allah has denied you. Then he is shown Hell-fire, parts of it consuming others. He is told: This is your place. You were in doubt, you died in doubt and you will be raised in doubt, in sha' Allah[8].

29- The angels smell the scent of the soul of the believer.

30- The believers welcome the new soul of a believer with more joy than the family of one who has been absent, on his homecoming.

31- When the soul joins the souls of other believers, it enjoys respite from the grief of this world.

From Abu Hurayrah (RA), from the Prophet (SAAS) who said: «When the believer is taken (by death), angels of mercy come to him with white silk, and say: 'Come out to the spirit of Allah. So (the soul) comes out, like the best scent of musk. Then the angels pass the soul to one another, smelling it, until they bring it to the (first) heaven. They say: What is this good scent which has come from the earth? In every heaven, the same question is asked, until they bring him to join the souls of the believers. They are more overjoyed to welcome him than the family of one who has been absent, when he comes home. They ask him: What happened to so-and-so? They [i.e. the angels who have brought

him] say: 'Leave him to rest, for he has been suffering in the world'. He says: 'He died, didn't he come to you?' They [the angels] say: 'He has gone to a place where he will have his home in a (bottomless) Pit [cf. al-Qari'ah 101:9].

As for the Kafir, angels of wrath will come to him with sackcloth. They say: Come out to the wrath of Allah. So (the soul) comes out like the foulest stench of dead meat, and they take it to the gates of the earth»[9].

32- The individual in the grave will be shown his place in Paradise or Hell continuously.

Allah (SWT) said:

«In front of the Fire will they be brought morning and evening: and (the Sentence will be) on the Day that Judgement will be established: Cast the People of Pharaoh into the severest Penalty!». [Ghafir 40:46].

From Ibn 'Umar (RA): the Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said:

«When any of you dies, he is shown his place morning and evening. If he is one of the people of Paradise, then he is one of them, and if he is one of the people of Hell, then he is one of them. He is told: 'This is your place until Allah raises you on the Day of Resurrection'».

[al-Bukhari, Muslim].

33- The animals can hear the voices of those who are being punished in their graves.

From Ibn Mas'ud (RA): The Prophet (SAAS) said: «The dead are being punished in their graves, and even the animals can hear their voices»[10].

34- The grave is the first stage of the Hereafter From Hane'a the servant of Uthman Ibn Affan (RA) said: Uthman (RA) used to cry until he wet his beard, if he was to stand on a grave, he was told:

you mention the Heaven and the Hell-Fire and you don't cry, but when you mention the grave you burst in tears! He said: I heard the Prophet of Allah (SAAS) saying: «The grave is the first stage of the Hereafter, whoever passes it will be at ease afterwords, and if he does not pass it he will be in worst of condition» I also heard him saying: «Never I saw a sight more horrifying than that of a grave».

35- The graves of those who fell into disobedience will be filled with darkness.

The Prophet (SAAS) said: «These graves are filled with darkness for their occupants. Allah enlightens them by my praying for them».

[Muslim et al].

36- The living are not able to hear the punishment of the grave.

The Prophet (SAAS) said: «This Ummah will be tried in its graves. If it were not for the fear that you might

not bury your dead, I would pray to Allah to make you hear what I hear».

[Muslim, Ahmad].

37- Food from the trees of Paradise before the Day of Judgement.

The Prophet (SAAS) said: «The soul of the believer is a bird eating from the trees of Paradise until Allah restores it to its body on the Day of Resurrection»[11].

38- The soul of the believer is tied to his debts.

The Prophet (SAAS) said: «The soul or the believer is tied to his debts until they are paid off»[12].

39- The people of heaven pray for the believer.

The Prophet (SAAS) said: «When the soul of the believer comes out, two angels receive it and take it up- he (SAAS) mentioned its good scent- and the people of heaven say: 'It is a good soul, which has come from the earth; may Allah bless you and the body which

you occupied'. The soul will be taken up to its Lord, then it will be said: 'Take it to its destiny'.

When the soul ot the Kafir comes out- he (SAAS) mentioned its stench- the people of heaven will say: 'It is an evil soul which has come from the earth. It is said: Take him to his destiny?.

[Muslim].

40- The grave of the believer will be well-lit.

41- The believer will sleep in his grave.

42- The deceased will long to tell his family of his good news.

The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said: «When the deceased is buried, two black-and-blue angels come to him, one called al-Munkar and the other called al-Nakir. They ask: 'What did you use to say about this man?' He will say that what he used to say was: 'He is the slave of Allah and His Messenger, I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, and that Muham-

mad is His slave and Messenger. They will say: We knew that you would say this'. Then they will expand his grave for him, seventy cubits by seventy, and light it for him. Then he will be told, 'Sleep'. He will say: 'I want to go back to my family and tell them'. They will say: 'Sleep like the groom who should not be woken by any except those he loves most'- until Allah will resurrect him from his place of rest.

- If he was a hypocrite, he will say: 'I heard the people saying such-and-such, and I said likewise. I do not know'. They will say: 'We knew that you would say this'. Then the earth will be told, 'Press him'; so it will press him and his ribs will be crushed together. It will continue to punish him until Allah resurrects him from that place[13].

43- The grave of the believer will be filled with greenery until the Day of Resurrection.

The Prophet (SAAS) said: «When a person is placed in his grave and his companions leave him, he can hear their footsteps. Then two angels come to him,

sit him up, and ask him: 'What did you use to say about this man?' i.e. Muhammad. The believer will say: 'I bear witness that he is the slave and Messenger of Allah'. Then he will be told: 'Look at your place in Hell-fire, which Allah has exchanged for a place in Paradise'. So he will look at them both. Then his grave will be widened for him, to a distance of seventy cubits, and it will be filled with greenery until the Day of Resurrection.

«The Kafir or hypocrite will be asked: 'What did you used to say about this man?' He will say: 'I don't know. I used to say whatever the people were saying. He will be told: 'You did not know and you did not care! Then he will be struck with an iron hammer between his two ears, and will utter a cry which will be heard by every creature around him, except for Jinn and men. Then his grave will be constricted for him until his ribs are crushed».

[Agreed upon].

44- The answers given by the believer in the grave are the result of guidance from Allah (SWT).

45- The individual is asked about his worship and religion in the grave.

The Prophet (SAAS) said: 'When the believer is placed in his grave, an angel comes to him and asks him: 'What did you use to worship?' Allah guides him and he says: 'I used to worship Allah'. He is asked: 'What did you use to say about this man?' He says: 'He is the slave and Messenger of Allah. He will not be asked about anything else. He is taken to a house which was in the Hell-fire, and he is told: 'This is your house which was in the Hell-fire, but Allah has protected you and had mercy on you, and has exchanged it for a house in Paradise for your'. He asks: 'Let me go and tell my family of this good news', but he is told: 'Remain where you are'. When the Kafir is placed in his grave, an angel comes to him and rebukes him, and asks him: 'What did you use to worship?' He says: 'I don't know'. He is told: 'You didn't know and you didn't care!' He is asked: 'What did you use to say about this man?' He says: 'I used to say whatever the people were saying'. Then he will be struck between the ears with an iron hammer and

will utter a cry which will be heard by the whole of creation apart from Jinn and men[14].

46- The dead do not hear what is going on on earth.

Allah (SWT) said: «So verily you cannot make the dead to hear, nor can you make the deaf to hear the call, when they show their backs and turn away». [al-Rum 30:52].

47- The (dead) people of Kulaib heard the words of the Prophet (SAAS), but were not able to reply[15].

It is proven in al-Bukhari that the Prophet (SAAS) looked upon the dead Kafirs of Kulaib after the Battle of Badr and said: «Have you found what your Lord promised you to be true?» He was asked: «Are you calling the dead?» He said: «You do not hear any better than they, but they cannot reply».

48- The Sahabah who had been martyred in the way of Allah (SWT) and were in al-Barzakh longed

to tell their brothers who had not died of the honour which was prepared for the martyrs.

The Prophet (SAAS) said: «When your brothers were martyred at Uhud, Allah placed their souls inside green birds which drink from the rivers of Paradise, eat of its fruits and seek shelter in lamps of gold which are suspended in the shade of the Throne. When they saw how good their food, drink and abode were, they said: 'Who will tell our brothers about us, that we are alive in Paradise and being amply provided for, so that they will not turn away from Jihad or abandon war?' Allah, may He be exalted, said: 'I will tell them about you'»[16].

Footnotes:

1. Al-Tirmidhi, Sahih al-Jami' (No. 1927).
2. Ibid, No 5182.
3. Sahih al-Targhib wa'l-Tarhib, Vol. 4, with a Hassan Isnad. Umar meant that because he honours his Lord, Allah (SWT) will help him to give the right answers, which will silence his questioner in the grave.
4. Abu Da'ud; al-Tirmidhi, op. cit, No 958.
5. Part of a Hadith narrated by al-Tirmidhi, Sahih al-Jami', No. 737; a Hasan Hadith.
6. Narrated by Ahmad, with a Sahih Isnad; reported in Sahih al-Targhib wa'l-Tarhib.
7. A mixture of good scents used only to scent the shroud and body of the dead.
8. Ibn Majah. This Hadith is also to be found in al-Albani, Sahih al-Jami; No 1964, and al-Targhib wa'l-Tarhib.
9. Ibn Hibban, Sahih, a similar Hadith is narrated by Ibn Majah with a Sahih Isnad. See al-Albani, Sahih al-Targhib wa'l-Tarhib.
10. Classed as Sahih by al-Albani, Sahih al-Jami; No 1961.
11. Classed as Sahih by al-Albani, op. cit, 2369.
12. Narrated and classed as Hasan by al-Tirmidhi; classed as Sahih by al-Albani, op. cit, No 6655.

13. Classed as Hasan by al-Albani, op. cit, No. 737.
14. Narrated by Abu Da'ud from Anas; see Sahih al-Jami; No 1926.
15. This applies only to the dead Kafirs thrown into the well following the Battle of Badr, the general rule is that the dead do not hear. See al-Alusi, Kitab al-Ayat al-Bayyinat fi 'Adam Sama' al-Amwat (ed. al-Albani).
16. Ahmad, Abu Da'ud and al-Hakim. Classed as Sahih by al-Albani, op. cit, No 5081.

PART FOUR

THE PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT OF SINNERS IN THE GRAVE

From Samurah Ibn Jundub: The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) often used to ask his Companions: «Has any one of you seen a dream?» So whoever Allah wished to do so would tell of a dream he had seen. One morning, he told us: «Last night, two persons came to me (in a dream), and said to me: «Let's go!» So I set off with them, and we came to a man who was lying down, with another man standing over him holding a big rock. He was throwing the rock down on the other man's head, smashing it. The rock rolled away, and the thrower went after it and brought it back. By the time he came back to the man, his head has been restored, then he proceeded to do the same thing again. I said, '*Subhan-Allah*! Who are these two?' (My two companions) said to me: 'Go on, go on!'.

«So we went on, and came to a man lying flat on his back, with another man standing over him holding

and iron hook. He put the hook in one side of the man's mouth and tore off that side of his face to the back (of his neck), and then tear his nose likewise from front to back, and his eye from front to back, and then do the same on the other side of the man's face. He had hardly finished on the second side, when the first side was restored, so he went back and started again. I said: '*Subhan-Allah*! Who are these two?' (My two companions said: 'Go on, go on!'.

«So we went on, and came across something like a *Tannur* [a kind of oven: usually a pit lined with clay for baking bread].- I think he said: In it there was much noise and voices.- We looked into it, and inside it were naked men and women, with flames coming up to them from underneath; When the flames reached them, they cried loudly. I asked, 'Who are these?' (My two companions) said: 'Go on, go on!'.

«So we went on and came to a river- I think he said: red like blood- and in the river there was a man swimming, and another man on the bank who had gathered many stones. The man who was swimming

came to the one who had gathered many stones, and opened his mouth, and the man on the river-bank placed a stone in his mouth. The man in the river swam away, then came back, and every time he came back, he opened his mouth and a stone was put in it. I asked (my two companions), 'Who are these two?' and they said to me, 'Go on, go on!'.

«So we went on, and came to an ugly man, with the most repulsive appearance you have ever seen. Beside him was a fire, and he was kindling it and running around it. I asked: 'Who is this?' (My two companions) said to me: 'Go on, go on!'.

So we went on, and came to a garden of deep green dense vegetation, with all sorts of spring colours. In the midst of the garden there was a very tall man, so tall that I could hardly see his head. Around this man were more children than I had ever seen. I asked: 'Who is this? Who are they?' My two companions said: 'Go on, go on!'.

«So we went on until we came to a huge garden, big-

ger and more magnificent than any I have ever seen. My two compaions told me: 'Go up into it', so we went up into it, to a city built of gold and silver bricks. We came to the gate of the city, asked for it to be opened, and we were admitted. There we met men with one half of their bodies as handsome as any you have ever seen, and the other half as ugly. My two companions told them: 'Go and throw yourselves into that river'- there was a river flowing through the city, with water as white as milk. They went and did as they were ordered, and came back with all trace of ugliness removed, in the best form.

«My two companions told me: This is the Paradise of 'Adan (*Jannah 'Adan*- Graden of Eden), and that is your place'- and I looked up and saw a palace like white clouds! My two companions said to me: 'That is your place'. I said to them: 'May Allah bless you both! Let me enter it. They said: 'Now (is not the time) for you to enter it'. I said: 'I have seen many wonders tonight. What is (the meaning of) all that I have seen?' They said: 'We will inform you: The first man whom you saw having his head smashed with a

rock, is the man who studies the Qur'an but neither recites nor acts upon it, and who sleeps and neglects the prescribed prayers. The man you saw having his face torn from his mouth, nose and eyes, front to back, is the man who goes out of his house in the morning and tells so many lies that it spreads all over the world. The naked men and women who were in something like a *Tannur* are the adulterers and adulteresses, and the man whom you saw swimming in the river and having stones thrown in his mouth was one who used to consume *Riba* (usury). The ugly-looking man you saw kindling the fire and walking around it is Malik, the gatekeeper of Hell. The tall man in the garden is Ibrahim, and the children around him are all the children who died in a state of *fitrah* [i.e. the natural- born state of mankind].

- Some of the Muslims asked: «O Messenger of Allah! What about the children of the Mushrikin [pagans]?» The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said: «The children of Mushrikin (are there) too. And the people who appeared half handsome and half ugly were those who had mixed a good deed with

a bad deed, but Allah forgave them».

[al-Bukhari].

In another report: «Tonight I saw (in a dream) two men who came to me and took me to a holy land. Then he mentioned it and said: We went on and came to a hole like a *Tannur.* Its upper part was narrow and its lower part was wide. The bottom of it was filled with fire. When the fire flared up, it lifted up the people inside, so that they nearly came out of the top, and when the fire died down, they went back inside. In this hole were naked men and women. We went on until we came to a river of blood- a man was standing in the middle of this river, and on the bank there was a man who had some stones in front of him. The man in the river would approach him, but when he tried to climb out, the man on the bank put a stone in his mouth, and pushed him back. Every time the man in the river tried to come out, the one on the bank threw a stone in his mouth and sent him back... They brought me to a tree and took me into a house more beautiful than any I have ever seen, in which there were old men and young men..

The one whom I saw with his mouth being torn, was the liar who spoke lies which spread from him until it reached the horizon; they will continue doing this to him until the Day of Resurrection... The one whom I saw with his head being smashed is the one whom Allah taught the Qur'an, but he slept (and failed to recite it) at night, and failed to act upon it during the day; they will continue doing this to him until the Day of Resurrection. The first house which I entered is a house for all the believers, and the (second) house is the house of the martyrs.. 'I am Jibril and this is Mika'il. Look up!' So I looked up and above me I saw something like clouds. They said: 'That is your place'. I asked: 'Let me enter my place'. They said: 'There is still some time for you to complete; when you have completed it you will come to your place'.»[1].

Footnote

1. **Narrated by al-Bukhari; quoted from al-Nawawi,** Riyadh al-Salihin, Bab Tahrim al-Kadhb.

PART FIVE

THE SINS FOR WHICH THE SINNERS WILL BE PUNISHED IN THE GRAVE

1- Punishment for the one who learnt the Qur'an and refused to act upon it, and for sleeping through the prescribed prayers.

We have already quoted the Hadith of Samurah Ibn Jundub in full. It includes the words: «.. We came to a man who was lying down, with another man standing over him holding a big rock. He was throwing the rock down on the other man's head, smashing it. The rock rolled away, and the thrower went after it and brought it back. By the time he came back to the man, his head has been restored, then he proceeded to do the same thing again..» At the end of the Hadith, the two angels told the Messenger of Allah (SAAS): «.. The first man whom you saw having his head smashed with a rock, is the man who studies the Qur'an but neither recites nor acts upon it, and who sleeps and neglects the prescribed prayers». In another report it was said: «They will carry on doing

that to him until the Day of Resurrection».

2- Punishment for Lying.

In the Hadith of Samurah Ibn Jundub, it also says: «.. So we went on, and came to a man lying flat on his back, with another man standing over him holding an iron hook. He put the hook in one side of the man's mouth and tore off that side of his face to the back (of his neck), and then tear his nose likewise from front to back, and his eye from front to back, and then do the same on the other side of the man's face. He had hardly finished on the second side, when the first side was restored, so he went back and started again». And at the end of the Hadith: «.. The man you saw having his face torn from his mouth, nose and eyes, front to back, is the man who goes out of his house in the morning and tells so many lies that it spreads all over the world». And in another report it is said: «They will carry on doing that to him until the Day of Resurrection».

3- Punishment for adulterers and adulteresses.

The Hadith quoted above also says: «So we went on,

and came across something like a *Tannur* [a kind of oven: usually a pit lined with clay for baking bread].- I think he said: In it there was much noise and voices.- We looked into it, and inside it were naked men and women, with flames were coming up to them from underneath; when the flames reached them, they cried loudly». This is explained as follows: «The naked men and women who were in something like a *Tannur* are the adulterers and adulteresses».

4- Punishment for consuming *Riba* (usury).

Also mentioned in the Hadith quoted: «.. So we went on and came to a river- I think he said: red like blood- and in the river there was a man swimming, and another man on the bank who had gathered many stones. The man who was swimming came to the one who had gathered many stones, and opened his mouth, and the man on the river-bank placed a stone in his mouth. The man in the river swam away, then came back, and everytime he came back, he opened his mouth and a stone was put in it».

At the end of the Hadith: «.. and the man whom you saw swimming in the river and having stones thrown in his mouth was one who used to consume *Riba* (usury)».

5- Punishment for not cleaning oneself properly after urinating.

The Prophet (SAAS) said: «Most of the punishment in the grave is because of (failing to clean oneself properly after) urinating»[1].

6- The Kafir's punishment is increased because of some of his family's weeping for him.

The Prophet (SAAS) said: «Allah increases the punishment of the Kafir by some of his family's weeping for him»[2].

7- The deceased is punished by (the mourners) wailing for him.

The Prophet (SAAS) said: «The deceased is punished in the grave by (the mourners) wailing for him»[3].

8- The deceased will be punished because of some of what his family say about him.

The Prophet (SAAS) said: «There is no person who dies, and whose mourners begin to cry 'O my mountain'! O my support!' but two angels will be assigned to take care of him: they will strike him and ask: 'Were you really like this!?»[4].

9- Punishment of the one who used to go around spreading slander.

From Ibn 'Abbas (RA): The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) passed by two graves and said: «Truly they are being punished. They are being punished for something which is easily-avoided, but is a major sin if it is committed. One of them used to go around spreading slander, and the other used to neglect to clean himself after urinating».

[Agreed upon].

Footnote

1. Classed as Sahih by al-Albani, Sahih al-Jami', No 3866.
2. Al-Nisa'i; classed as Sahih by al-Albani, op. cit., No. 1893.
3. Al-Bukhari, Muslim, et al. If the deceased had told his family not to wail for him, then he will not be punished; and Allah knows best. See Ahkam al-Jana'iz, pp 28, 29.
4. Al-Tirmidhi. Classed as Sahih by al-Albani, op. cit.,, No. 5664. See also al-Targhib wa'l-Tarhib.

PART SIX

THE PROPHETS AND BARZAKH

1- Allah, may He be exalted, has assigned an angel to the grave of the Prophet (SAAS), to inform him of those who send blessings on him by telling him the name of the person who has sent blessings on the Messenger (SAAS).

He (SAAS) said: «Increase the blessings you send on me, for Allah has assigned an angel to my grave. Whenever anyone of my Ummah sends blessings on me, that angel will say to me: 'O Muhammad, so-and-so the son of so-and-so has sent blessings on you now»[1].

He (SAAS) said: «Increase the blessings you send on me on Fridays, for every time someone sends blessings and prays for me on a Friday, I will be told about his prayer...»[2].

2- The earth does not consume the bodies of the Prophets.

The Prophets (SAAS) said: «The best of your days is Friday. Adam was created on a Friday and died on a Friday; the Trumpet will be blown on a Friday, and all the living will be struck down on a Friday. Increase the blessings you send on me on Fridays, for I will be told about your prayers. Allah has forbidden the earth to consume the bodies of the Prophets»[3].

3- The Prophets are alive in the grave.

4- They, peace be upon them, pray in their graves.

The Prophet (SAAS) said: «The Prophets are alive in their graves, and pray[4]... On the night of the Isra [Night Journey], I passed by Musa (who was) standing in his grave and praying»[5].

5- The Messenger (SAAS) met Adam, Yahya, 'Isa, Yusuf, Idris, Harun, Musa and Ibrahim (AS).

6- Musa (AS) wept in Barzakh out of jealousy [NB: the Arabic word used here refers specifically to a positive form of jealousy and is not to be taken

to have a negative connotation].

7- Musa (AS) advised our Prophet (SAAS) to ask Allah, may He be exalted, to reduce the (number of) obligatory prayers.

From Malik Ibn Sa'sa'ah (RA) from the Messenger of Allah (SAAS) who said: «While I was lying down in al-Hatim, someone came to me and split open what is between this and this- he indicated the space from the top of his chest to below his navel- and he took out my heart. Then a golden cup filled with faith was brought to me. My heart was washed with Zamzam water, filled up (with faith) and put back in its place. A white beast, smaller than a mule, and bigger than a donkey, called al-Buraq, was brought to me. One stride of this creature covered a distance as far as it could see. I was mounted upon it. Jibril set off with me until we reached the first heaven, and he asked for it to be opened. He was asked: 'Who is there?' He said: 'Jibril'. The voice asked: 'Who is with you?' He said: 'Muhammad'. The voice asked: 'Has revelation been sent to him?' Jibril answered,

'Yes'. The voice said: 'Welcome to him, blessed is the one who has come'.- and the first heaven was opened. When I entered, there was Adam. Jibril said: 'This is your father Adam; greet him. I greeted him' and he returned the greeting, then he said: 'Welcome to the righteous son and the righteous Prophet'.

«Then Jibril took me up until we reached the second heaven, and he asked for it to be opened. He was asked: 'Who is there?' He said: 'Jibril'. The voice asked: 'Who is with you?' He said: 'Muhammad'. The voice asked: 'Has revelation been sent to him?' Jibril answered, 'Yes'. The voice said: 'Welcome to him, blessed is the one who has come'.- and the second heaven was opened. When I entered, there were Yahya and Isa, who were maternal cousins. Jibril said: 'These are Yahya and Isa; greet them'. I greeted them and they returned the greeting, then they said: 'Welcome to the righteous brother and the righteous Prophet'.

«Then Jibril took me up until we reached the third heaven, and he asked for it to be opened. He was

asked: 'Who is there?' He said: 'Jibril'. The voice asked: 'Who is with you?' He said: 'Muhammad'. The voice asked: 'Has revelation been sent to him?' Jibril answered, 'Yes'. The voice said: 'Welcome to him, blessed is the one who has come'.- and the third heaven was opened. When I entered, there was Yusuf. Jibril said: 'This is Yusuf, greet him'. I greeted him and he returned the greeting, then he said: 'Welcome to the righteous brother and the righteous Prophet'.

«Then Jibril took me up until we reached the fourth heaven, and he asked for it to be opened. He was asked: 'Who is there?' He said: 'Jibril'. The voice asked: 'Who is with you?' He said: 'Muhammad'. The voice asked: 'Has revelation been sent to him?' Jibril answered, 'Yes'. The voice said: 'Welcome to him, blessed is the one who has come'.- and the fourth heaven was opened. When I entered, there was Idris. Jibril said: 'This is Idris; greet him'. I greeted him and he returned the greeting, then he said: 'Welcome to the righteous brother and the righteous Prophet'.

«Then Jibril took me up until we reached the fifth heaven, and he asked for it to be opened. He was asked: 'Who is there?' He said: 'Jibril'. The voice asked: 'Who is with you?' He said: 'Muhammad'. The voice asked: 'Has revelation been sent to him?' Jibril answered, 'Yes'. The voice said: 'Welcome to him, blessed is the one who has come'.- and the fifth heaven was opened. When I entered, there was Harun. Jibril said: 'This is Harun; greet him'. I greeted him and he returned the greeting, then he said: 'Welcome to the righteous brother and the righteous Prophet'.

«Then Jibril took me up until we reached the sixth heaven, and he asked for it to be opened. He was asked: 'Who is there?' He said: 'Jibril'. The voice asked: 'Who is with you?' He said: 'Muhammad'. The voice asked: 'Has revelation been sent to him?'. Jibril answered, 'Yes'. The voice said: 'Welcome to him, blessed is the one who has come'.- and the sixth heaven was opened. When I entered, there was Musa. Jibril said: 'This is Musa; greet him'. I greeted him and he returned the greeting, then he

said: 'Welcome to the righteous brother and the righteous Prophet'.

«Then Jibril took me up until we reached the seventh heaven, and he asked for it to be opened. He was asked: 'Who is there?'. He said: 'Jibril'. The voice asked: 'Who is with you?' He said: 'Muhammad'. The voice asked: 'Has revelation been sent to him?' Jibril answered, 'Yes'. The voice said: 'Welcome to him, blessed is the one who has come'.- and the seventh heaven was opened. When I entered, there was Ibrahim. Jibril said: 'This is your father Ibrahim; great him'. I greeted him and he returned the greeting, then he said: 'Welcome to the righteous son and the righteous Prophet'.

«Then I was taken up to the Lote-tree beyond which none may pass [cf. al-Najm 53:14]; its fruits were like the pitchers of Hajar and its leaves were like the ears of elephants. Jibril said: 'This is the Lote-tree beyond which none may pass'.

«There were four rivers, two hidden and two visible.

I asked: 'What are these, O Jibril?' He said: 'The two hidden rivers are rivers of Paradise; the two visible rivers are the Nile and the Euphrates'.

«Then I was taken up to the Much-Frequented Fane [cf. al Tur 52:4]. I asked, ''O Jibril, what is this?' He said: 'This is the Much-Frequented Fane; every day, seventy thousand angels pray in it, and when they leave, another seventy thousand come'.

«Then I was presented with a vessel of wine, a vessel of milk and a vessel of honey. I chosed the milk, and Jibril said: 'This is the natural disposition *(Fitrah)* of your Ummah'.

«Then Salat (Prayer) was made obligatory: fifty prayers every day. Then I returned, and passed by Musa, who asked, What have you been commanded to do?' I said, 'I have been commanded to perform fifty prayers every day'. He said: 'Your Ummah will not be able to perform fifty prayers every day. By Allah, I tested the people before you, and I tried my utmost to reform the people of Israel. Go back to your

Lord and ask Him to lighten the burden of your Ummah'. So I went back, and the number of prayers was reduced by ten (to forty). I went back to Musa, and he said the same as before. So I went back, and the number of prayers was reduced by a further ten (to thirty) I went back to Musa, and he said the same as before. So I went back again, and the number of prayers was reduced by a further ten (to twenty). I went back to Musa, and he said the same as before. So I went back, and the number of prayers was reduced by a further ten (to ten). So I went back to Musa, and he said the same as before. So I went back, and was ordered to perform five prayers every day. I came back to Musa, and he asked, 'What have you been commanded to do?' I said: 'I have been commanded to perform five prayers every day'. Musa said: 'Your Ummah will not be able to perform five prayers every day. I have tested the people before you, and I tried my utmost to reform the people of Israel. Go back to your Lord and ask Him to lighten the burden of your Ummah'. I said: 'I have asked my Lord until I felt ashamed. Now I am content and submit (to His Will)'. When I passed by, a

voice proclaimed: 'I have confirmed My command and lightened the burden of My servents'».

[al-Bukhari, Muslim, Ahmad, al-Nisa'i].

Footnote

1. Al-Daylami, Musnad al-Firdaws; classed as Hasan by al-Albani, Sahih al-Jami; No 1218.
2. Classed as Sahih by al-Albani, op. cit, No 1219.
3. Abu Da'ud, al-Nisa'i, Ibn Majah, et al. See also al-Albani, op. cit, No. 2208.
4. Classed as Sahih by al-Albani, op. cit, No. 2787.
5. Muslim et al.

PART SEVEN

DEEDS WHICH WILL BENEFIT THE DECEASED AFTER HIS DEATH

1- Praying for him.

The Prophet (SAAS) said:

«If a company of Muslims numbering one hundred pray over a dead person, all of them interceding for him, their intercession [i.e. prayers for forgiveness and mercy] for him will be accepted»[1].

«If a company of the people pray over a dead person, they will intercede for him»[2].

2- The deceased feels the comforting presence of his brothers in Allah (SWT) after the burial, for a period of time equal to the time taken to sacrifice a camel and distribute its meat.

As quoted before, 'Amr Ibn al-'As (RA) said: «When

you bury me, stay around my grave for the time it would take to sacrifice a camel and distribute its meat, so that I may be comforted by your presence, until I see how I will answer the messengers of my Lord». [Muslim].

3- Praying for strength and forgiveness for him immediately after his burial.

From Uthman Ibn Affan (RA) who said: «Whenever the Prophet (SAAS) had finished burying anyone, he would stand by the grave and say: 'Ask for forgiveness and strength for your brother, for even now he is being questioned»[3].

4- Continuous charity *(Sadaqah Jariyah)*, which he set up in his lifetime; beneficial knowledge; and a pious son who will pray for him.

The Prophet (SAAS) said: «When a person dies, his deeds stop, except for three: continuous charity, knowledge which benefits others, or a pious son who will pray for him» [Muslim].

5- Charity given by the son of the deceased on his\her behalf.

From 'A'ishah (RA): a man said to the Prophet (SAAS): «My mother died suddenly without making any will. I think she would definitely have given charity *(Sadaqah)* if she had been able to speak. Would she have a reward if I gave charity on her behalf?» He said: «yes». [al-Bukhari, Muslim].

6- All the believers and Muslims should pray for him and ask forgiveness for him.

Allah (SWT) says: «And those who came after them say: 'Our Lord! Forgive us, and our brethren who came before us into the Faith..» [al-Hashr 59:10].

The Prophet (SAAS) said: «Whoever prays for forgiveness for the believing men and believing women, Allah will give him one reward for each believing man and believing women (he prayed for)»[4].

7- Defending the borders of Islam for the sake of Allah (SWT) in this world.

The Prophet (SAAS) said: «When a person dies his

good deeds come to an end, except for his defending the borders of Islam for the sake of Allah *(fi sabilil-lah).* This deed will grow (i.e. in reward) until the Day of Judgement, and he will be protected from the Fitnah of the grave»[5].

Footnote

1. **Muslim et al.**
2. **Al-Nisa'i: classed as Hasan by al-Albani**, Sahih al-Jami', No. 5663.
3. **Abu Da'ud; classed as Sahih by al-Albani**, op. cit, No. 956.
4. **Al- Tabarani,** al kabir, **classed as Hasan by al- Al-bani,** op. cit., No. 5902.
5. **Abu Da'ud, al-Tirmidhi. Described by the latter as a Sahih Hasan Hadith.**

PART EIGHT

THINGS WHICH SAVE A PERSON FROM THE PUNISHMENT OF THE GRAVE

1- Martyrdom on the battlefield.

(a) The Prophet (SAAS) said: «The martyr enjoys six specific blessings from Allah: his sins will be forgiven from the first moment his blood is shed; he will see his place in Paradise; he will be protected from the punishment of the grave; he will feel secure on the most fearful Day (i.e. the Day of Judgement); he will be clothed in the robes of faith; he will be married to *al-Hur al-'Ayn*; he will be able to intercede for seventy members of his family»[1].

(b) From a man from among the Companions of the Prophet (SAAS): A man asked the Prophet (SAAS): «O Messenger of Allah, why will all the believers except the martyr suffer the Fitnah of the grave?» He said: «The shining swords above the head of the martyr are Fitnah enough!»[2].

2- Defending the borders of Islam for the sake of Allah (SWT).

(a) The Prophet (SAAS) said: «Defending the borders of Islam for a day and a night is better than fasting and praying at night for a month; if a man dies (whilst defending the borders of Islam), the good deed he was doing will continue to accumulate reward and bring him sustenance *(Rizq)*, and he will be protected from the Fitnah of the grave». [Muslim].

(b) The Prophet (SAAS) said: «When a person dies, his good deeds come to an end, except for his defending the borders of Islam for the sake of Allah *(fi sabi-lillah)*. This deed will grow (i.e. in reward) until the Day of Judgement, and he will be protected from the Fitnah of the grave».

3- Death from a stomach disease.

From Abdullah Ibn Yassar who said: «I was sitting with Sulayman Ibn Sard and Khalid Ibn 'Arfatah, and they mentioned that a man had died, from a sto-

mach disease. They expressed their wish to be present at his funeral, and one of them said to the other, 'Didn't the Messenger of Allah (SAAS) say: «Whoever is killed by a stomach disease will not be punished in the grave?». The other said: 'Yes, indeed'. (in another report: You have spoken the truth)[3].

4- Reciting Surah Tabaraka (i.c. al-Mulk, 67).

The Prophet (SAAS) said: «Surah Tabaraka is a shield from the punishment of the grave»[4].

5- Dying on a Friday (day or night).

The Prophet (SAAS) said: «There is no-one who died on the day or night of Friday, but Allah, may He be exalted, protected him from the Fitnah of the grave»[5].

Footnotes

1. Al-Tirmidhi reported it and classed it as Sahih; also reported by Ibn Majah, Ahmad. Classed as Sahih by al-Albani, Ahkam al-Jana'iz, p 35-36.
2. Al-Nisa'i. Classed as Sahih by al-Albani, op. cit, p 36.
3. Classed as Sahih by al-Albani, as Hasan by al-Tirmidhi et al. Classed as Sahih in Ahkam al-Jana'iz, p 38.
4. Classed as Sahih by al-Albani, Sahih al-Jami', No 3537.
5. Ahmad, Musnad; al-Tirmidhi. Classed as Hasan by al-Albani, op. cit, No 5649.

EPILOGUE:

DAILY ISLAMIC LIFE

* Do you pray Fajr in the mosque every day, in congregation?

* Do you observe every prayer in the mosque in congregation?

* Have you read any part of the Book of Allah today?

* After every prayer, do you recite *Dhikr* and *Wird*?

* Do you observe the regular Sunnah prayers before and after the Fard prayers?

* Did you concentrate on your prayer today and really think about the words you were saying?

* Did you remember death and the grave?

* Did you remember the Last Day and its terrors?

* Did you ask Allah (SWT) three times to admit you

to Paradise? For whoever asks Allah (SWT) to admit him to Paradise, Paradise says: «O Allah, admit him to Paradise!»[1].

* Have you asked Allah (SWT) three times to protect you from the punishment of Hell? Whoever does that, Hell says: «O Allah, protect him from Hell!»[2].

* Have you read anything from the Hadith of the Prophet (SAAS)?

* Have you thought of distancing yourself from bad gatherings?

* Have you tried to avoid laughing and joking excessively?

* Have you wept today for fear of Allah (SWT)?

* Have you recited the *Dhikr* for morning and evening?

* Have you asked Allah (SWT) for forgiveness for your sins today?

* Have you asked Allah (SWT) sincerely for martyr-dom? For the Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said: «Whoever asks Allah sincerely for martyrodom, Al-lah will give him the status of martyr, even if he dies on his bed».
[Muslim et al.].

* Have you asked Allah (SWT) to make your heart strong in faith?

* Have you made the most of the hours during which especially Allah (SWT) will answer your prayers?

* Have you bought a new Islamic book from which you will learn more about your religion?

* Have you asked forgiveness for the believers, men and women- because for every believing man and be-lieving woman (for whom you ask forgiveness), there will be a reward?.

* Have you praised Allah (SWT) for the blessing of Islam?

* Have you praised Allah (SWT) for the blessing of

hearing, sights, reason and all his blessings?.

* Have you given charity today to the poor and needy?

* Have you refrained from getting angry for your own sake, and only got angry for the sake of Allah (SWT)?

* Have you avoided being proud and arrogant?

* Have you visited any of your brothers in Allah (SWT)?

* Have you prayed to Allah (SWT) for your brothers and neighbours, and anyone else you are in touch with?

* Have you treated your parents with love and kindness?

* Have you responded to any calamity by saying: *Inna Lillahi wa inna ilayhi Raji'un* («To Allah we belong, and to Him is our return» [al-Baqarah 2:156])[3].

* Have you prayed this Du'a' today?

Allahumma inni a'udhu bika 'an ushrika bika wa

ana a'lam, wa astaghfiruka lima la a'lam (O Allah, I seek refuge with You from knowingly association anything with You, and ask Your forgiveness if I have unwittingly done so).

- For whoever says this, Allah (SWT) will remove from him both major and minor forms of Shirk[4].

Footnotes

1. **The Hadith in full reads: «Whoever asks Allah three times for Paradise, Paradise says: 'O Allah. Admit him to paradise!' And whoever asks three times for protection from hell, hell says: 'O Allah protect him from Hell!».**

   [al-Tirmidhi; classed as Sahih by al-Albani, Sahih al-Jami', No. 6151, vol. 6].
2. See above.
3. **The Prophet (SAAS) said: «Any one of you should say** *Inna Lillahi wa inna ilayhi Raji'un* **When any misfortune befalls him, even if his shoe gets damaged, for these are all types of 'calamity'».**

   [Classed as Hasan by al-Albani, al-Kalim al-Tayyib, No. 140].
4. See Sahih al-Jami', No 3625.

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